Northwest Washington Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Soundings

Vol. 28, Issue 2 February 2012

Mary's Place

by The Rev. Jerry Buss, Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission

Ten families that include over 30 children have been housed the whole month of December because of donations from ELCA congregations and individuals. Some of the families will be able to stay in this housing through January. Why? Because the appeal asked for $10,000 but nearly $20,000 was received. Thanks be to God! Well over 100 people representing at least 25 of our congregations contributed to this appeal.

Here is a *thank you* from the families:

Dear ELCA Friends and Family,

What a blessing! This is over the top, off the charts amazing! Thank you for throwing us a life line when we needed it most. You have pulled us in from the torrential rains, winds and cold and given us what we couldn›t provide for ourselves...safety, warmth, shelter and a place to call home and be together.

Tonight, there are 10 families up in a hotel because of the love and generosity you have showered on all of us. Most importantly, you have reached out and reminded us we are not alone. You love us, you care for us and you have come beside us to walk with us on our journey **out** of homelessness.

We need your continued prayers as the moms work

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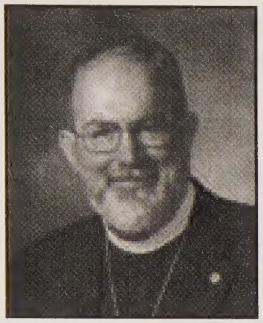
A Word From The Bishop



The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger

For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. Deuteronomy 10:17-18) NRSV

Susan Johnson, National Bishop for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, told us at our annual Bishops' Academy that the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is now the second largest provider of services to refugees in the world. Only the International Red Cross is serving more refugees than LWF. This is yet another example of how Lutherans are working behind the scenes to bring God's welcome and compassion to those in need.

When you hear the news reports of the refugee camps serving the people of Somalia in Kenya and Ethiopia, it is LWF who is in charge of maintaining those camps. It is Lutherans from around the world coming together to respond in ways that will change lives.

I know the jokes about shy, humble Lutherans. I know that we are not about bringing attention to ourselves when we are doing God's work. I also know that we are too often unaware of what our dollars given to the hunger appeal or our quilts given to Lutheran World Relief (LWR) do when they leave our services of blessing. These gifts are making a difference.

The concerns about the institutionalization of the church are appropriate and should be heard. On the other hand it is because the church has organized and is a large institution that we are able to take on these overwhelming responsibilities. Your mission partnership support provides

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the staff for this work. Your gift to the hunger appeal provides the aid that can be shared. This effort takes all we can give and more. The fact is that it is God at work.

I am grateful to God that we have the ability to respond to these "strangers" that God loves. At times the alphabet soup of institutional responses can confuse and overwhelm us. LWF, LWR and LDR each has a role to play in local and international efforts to do what God has commanded that we do. The ELCA is involved in these and other organizations like Church World Service. We are at work in the whole world even as we gather in our local congregations.

We will continue to advocate for a world in which refugees are not a reality. Until that day when the reign of God is complete, we will respond to those who are without homes or hope. Their hope is in God. Through LWF you are responding as the people of God. Thanks be to God.

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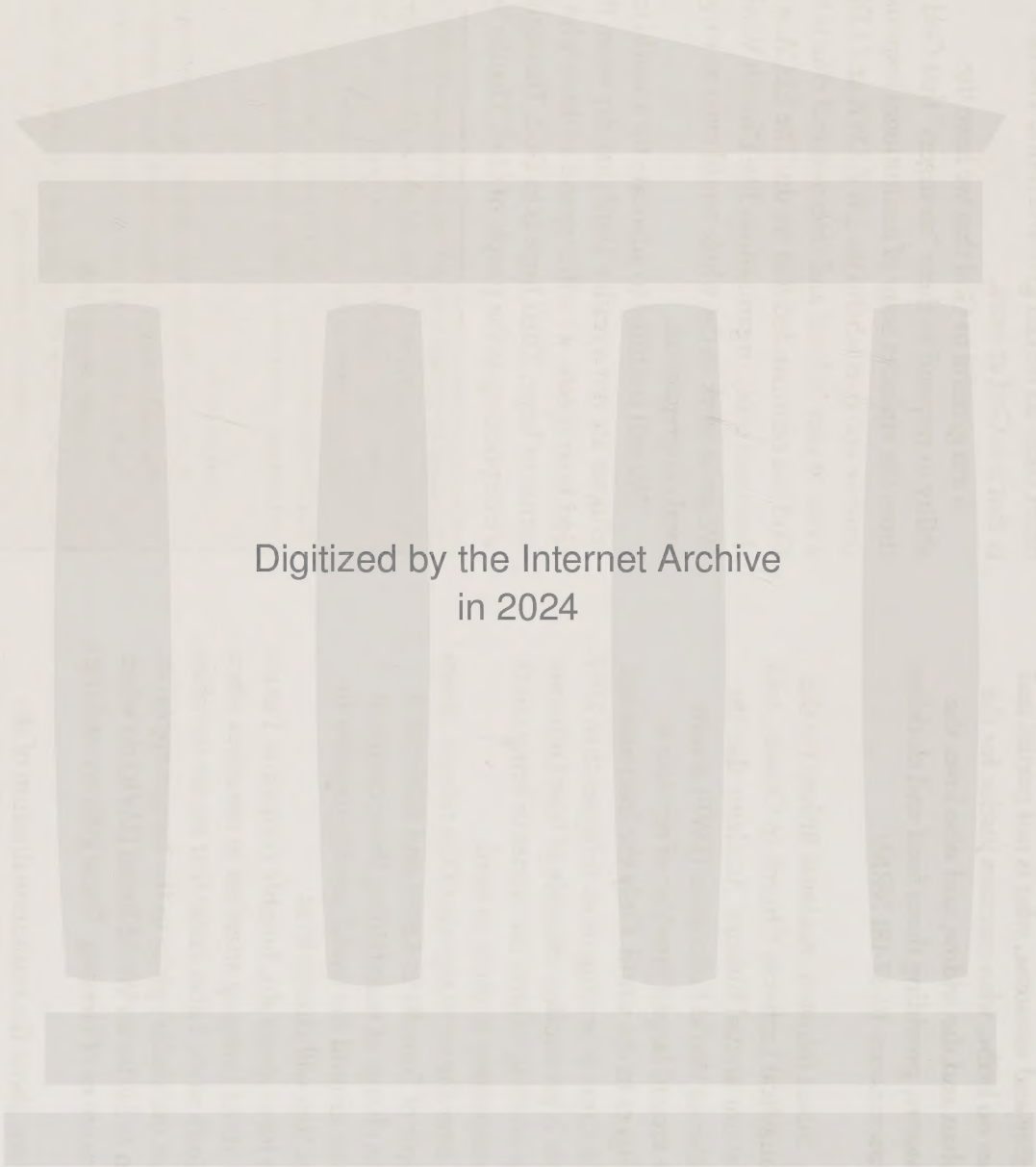

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Two Years Later

Two years ago the news was devastating; the images, indelible. The 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck the island nation of Haiti the afternoon of January 12, 2010, the worst in more than 200 years, killed approximately 316,000 people, brought countless buildings to the ground in a matter of seconds, and forever changed the lives of millions.

Since 1997, through partner organizations, Lutheran World Relief (LWR) has been working in Haiti because the majority of Haitians faced decades of problems, most of which begin and end in extreme poverty. Poor health and malnutrition, an utter lack of work opportunities, government corruption and the devastation of Haiti's natural resources have left few options

Following the earthquake, LWR delivered immediate relief with water, food and resources like tarps, quilts, personal care kits and school kits; and supporting cash-for-work programs, latrine-building for sanitation, and basic medical monitoring and treatment training in communities of displaced people.

Through our gifts LWR is committed to seeing Haiti through long-term rehabilitation:

- **Agriculture**—Relieving hunger and malnutrition through agriculture programs that include setting up seed banks and providing technical training for farmers and supporting farmer associations that will give farmers better bargaining power for buying seeds and equipment and selling crops.
- **Water**—Building and distributing water filters to give people access to clean drinking water, and training locals how to maintain them.
- **Health and Livelihoods**--Getting artisans back to work and increasing their incomes through business training and helping them access credit.

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Mary's Place

diligently, calling 30 to 50 shelters every day looking for a bed for themselves and their children. Prayers that they and the children will be able to sustain the rejection, the grief that comes with losing their homes and the struggle of finding more sustainable employment and housing.

Thank you for being the saving grace of our world. We could not survive without your love and goodness to us!

Bug hugs!

Marty Hartman for all the women and their children at Mary›s Place

Editor's Note: Every second Wednesday Mary's Place holds a community breakfast. Join others at 8 a.m. for breakfast, an opportunity to meet the women of Mary's Place, and have a tour of the facility. Contact Mary's Place to save your spot: email at office@marysplaceseattle.org.

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Two Years Later

- **Civic Participation**—Helping establish community-based organizations that will give the poor collective power to influence their government.

For more information about how our generosity and compassion are helping those in Haiti please visit www.lwr.org.

For more information about how LWR is involved in Haiti visit www.lwr.org

Thanks to your compassion and generosity, Lutheran World Relief is working.

Two smiling boys in Haiti (LWR website).

Get A Jump On Advocay Day

University Lutheran, along with the University District Ecumenical Parish, is hosting a workshop on Saturday, February 4, in order to "Get a Jump on Interfaith Advocacy Day" down in Olympia, which will happen on Tuesday, February 14.

You are encouraged to come to this workshop at ULC and learn about the current issues and bills that are being debated in Olympia so that when you go down to Olympia (or write your legislators), you will be prepared to speak with your legislators about matters pertaining to justice and peace that are priorities of Faith Action Network. People will gather for this free event at 9:30 a.m. Presentations will begin at 10 a.m.

Uniting Hearts and Minds: Raising Revenue for the Common Good

Interfaith Advocacy Day 2012

It's time again to register for the annual Interfaith Advocacy Day (IFAD)!

IFAD brings together social justice advocates from faith communities and nonprofits across the state of Washington. The day's activities include workshops on issues and advocacy (topics will include the state budget, environment, disability services, and housing/homelessness), legislative briefings, visits with your state legislators, and an interfaith worship.

Advocacy Day will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 14, at United Churches of Olympia, 110 11th Ave SE, Olympia. Cost: $20 if you register by 5 p.m. on Jan. 31, and $25 if you register after Jan. 31. Registration fee includes continental breakfast, lunch, materials and organizing the event. Register at www.fan.org.

Speaking Christian

Speaking Christian: Reclaiming Christian Language is a lecture series with Marcus Borg, will be held Friday, Feb. 10 through Sunday, Feb. 12, University Congregational United Church of Christ, 4515 16th Ave. NE, Seattle

Marcus Borg, internationally known biblical and Jesus scholar, will give a series of lectures on knowing and understanding Christian language. For an increasing number, it is largely unfamiliar and like a foreign language. For many others, it is often misunderstood, leading to forms of Christianity that focus on belief, sin and forgiveness, individual moral behavior, and heaven and hell. The lectures emphasize the much richer and often different biblical and ancient meanings of crucial Christian words, phrases, and stories.

For tickets and more information, contact University Congregational United Church of Christ at 206-524-6255, ext. 3447 or lectureseries@universityucc.org Registration forms are also available at www.universityucc.org.

Ending Family Violence

The Lutheran Community Foundation is sponsoring a number of **free** webinars as part of their Ending Family Violence Initiative. The invitation is extended through the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA. Topics include:

- How to Reduce the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church
- Stop Teen Violence Before it Starts
- Domestic Violence 101 for Christian Clergy
- What to do if a Registered Sex Offender Comes to Church

All of the seminars are free and open to anyone. A list of webinars is available on the website and attendees need to register online at http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org/training/upcoming-webinars

Our Chance For Savings

Congratulations! In 2011 more than 65 percent of eligible ELCA-primary plan members and spouses in our synod took the Mayo Health Assessment.

With that news your congregation and the synod saved two percent on medical costs: A total of $33,000 in savings.

Can this synod reach, or surpass, that goal in 2012?

The Mayo Clinic Health Assessment is confidential and takes about 15 minutes to complete. If you have recent lab results, great. If not, you can always fill in those numbers later.

The portal to take the assessment will open on January 1, 2012, at www.elcaforwellness.org. Find instructions in the *Understand My Benefits* section at www.elcabop.org. Once you complete the assessment you will earn $150 in your personal wellness account to offset out-of-pocket medical expenses.

Reminder: the ELCA *Board of Pension* is changing its name to *Portico Benefit Services*. This will take place during the next 12 to 18 months.

Soul Cafe

Soul Café is a social networking site and is for members, congregations, synods and organizations of Region 1. Learn more at www.soulcafe.org.

2012 Youth Gathering

Back In New Orleans

Registration for the *2012 ELCA Youth Gathering* opened on October 9 and will close once 39,000 have registered. To learn more, visit www.elca.org.gathering.

The Gathering will take place July 18 - 22 in New Orleans. The theme, *citizens with the saints*, is centered around Ephesians 2:14-20.

Open

Registration For Spring Bishop's Convocation

Are you envisioning a post-Easter time away this spring? A time to relax, re-connect with colleagues, and be renewed for ministry? Registration is open for the 2012 Spring Bishop's Convocation, to be held at scenic Seabeck Christian Conference Center, April 30-May 2.

The Rev. Eric H.F. Law will present *Holy Currencies: Creating Sustainable Missional Ministries.*

Bishop Boerger will bring news from the synod and the ELCA and will be available, as always, for times of individual conversation. Consultation to Clergy staff will also be available for individual appointments and general conversation.

Registrations received in the synod office, with payment, by March 15 will receive an early registration discount. Double occupancy rates are $200, single occupancy rates are $300.

Registrations received between March 15 and March 30 are $225 double occupancy and $325 single occupancy. All meals are included in the cost.

Registration closes March 30 and a waiting list will be assembled and accommodated in the event of cancellations. Registration forms are available online (www.lutheransnw.org) but a hard copy must be printed out and mailed to the synod office at: NW Washington Synod 5519 Phinney Avenue North Seattle WA 98103.

Crossroads

The Crossroads Seminar is to provide a safe and open venue for rostered leaders to explore and discern potential vocational transitions in their personal and professional lives. Led by Philip Streufert, Director of Consultation to Clergy, the next three day workshop will take place May 14-16 at the UW Lutheran Center. More details available at www.lutheransnw.org/calendar.

Baptismal Living, Baptismal Ethics

Join others on March 10 to reflect on our fundamental identity as a baptismal people committed to the life of this world.

Keynote speaker is Gordon Lathrop, internationally known scholar, pastor and speaker on Christian liturgy and daily life. He will reflect with attendees on the mystery and mission of baptismal living within a highly secularized regional cultures.

Workshops will be offered in the morning and afternoon. The event will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 10, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Seattle.

Cost is $25 ($10 for students) and includes lunch, refreshments, printed materials and childcare. To register, or for more information, email stephenshaver@gmail.com.

The event is sponsored by St. Paul's Episcopal Church, PLU Center for Religion and Culture in the Pacific Northwest and the Diocese of Olympia of Ministry and Theology.

Spanish Language and Hispanic Ministry

An Intensive Program

The Lutheran Seminary Program of the Southwest invites you to attend the Spanish Language and Hispanic Ministry. The Program seeks to prepare pastors for ministry in a rapidly changing and pluralistic world that is the mission field of the emerging church of the 21st century. The event will take place on the campus of the Seminary of the Southwest, located in Austin, Texas, from Sunday, May 27, through Friday, June 1. Distinguished speakers include the Rev. Dr. Jay Alanís, Dr. Regina Musselman and the Rev. Dr. Eliseo Pérez-Alvarez. For more details contact Consuelo at 512-477-2666. More details are also available on the synod website at www.lutheransnw.org.

Here 'n There

- **Where did Quilts and Kits to Lutheran World Relief go in 2011?** To 26 countries around the world. Thanks to the compassion and generosity of members we were able to send: 355,786 quilts; 166,427 school kits; 311,763 personal care kits; 72610 baby care kits; and 21,234 fabric kits.
- In 2011 many **Everett congregations** supported the Trinity Aid Bank. Members from Trinity, Central, Trinity Episcopal, First Covenant and Trinity Lutheran College. Members at Central in Everett raised more than $9413 for their food basket mission.
- Members at **Bethany in Seattle** donated 650 lbs of food and household items in 2011 to the University Food Bank.
- In December members at **Our Savior's in Everett** donated enough food to fill more than 100 baskets and wrapped almost 400 presents for those in need in their community.
- In Kirkland, members at **Holy Spirit** packed 62 baskets of food for their Thanksgiving Food Baskets for Kirkland Interfaith Transitions in Housing. And members were not done. They also collected $2812 which allowed additional purchases to be made for the baskets. And, Thrivent matched their efforts with $800.
- The Annual Trinity Lutheran Bazaar at **Trinity in Freeland** raised more than $12,000 for local charities.
- Members at **First in Mount Vernon** donated more than 1300 lbs for the charity Neighbors in Need.
- **January Cold Weather Shelters:** Trinity in Lynnwood hosted 155 people over six nights; Kent Lutheran in Kent hosted 130 people (including Pastor Jane Prestbye) over seven nights, Faith in Bellingham hosted 70 people over three nights, and Our Saviour's in Arlington hosted six people over two nights.

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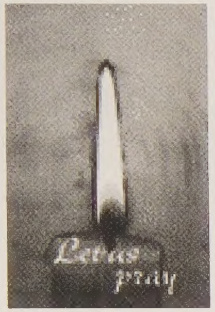
Within Our Family



We Continue To Hold In Our Prayers:

- ✞ **The Rev. Brian Beistel (ret.)**
- ✞ **The Rev. Mary Bosell,** on disability
- ✞ **The Rev. John Ericksen (ret.)** and his wife, Marita
- ✞ **The Rev. Phil Petrasek (ret.)** and his wife Linda
- ✞ **The Rev. Donna Reilly Williams (ret.)**
- ✞ **The Rev. Paul Wuest (ret.)**

We Pray For:

- ✞ **The family of Aimee Roads,** a therapist at Lutheran Counseling Network. Aimee died unexpectedly on December18. Aimee leaves her husband, Pat, and three year old daughter Rowan. Cards may be sent to: Patrick Roads, 2653 SW 333rd Place, Federal Way, WA 98023.
- ✞ **The family of the Rev. Ted Brueckner (ret.).** He passed away on New Year's Day. Cards may be sent to: Doris Brueckner, Merrill Gardens #320, 14905 Bothell-Everett Hwy, Mill Creek WA 98012.
- ✞ **For the family of K. Simundson.** K was the father of Linda Petrasek and father-in-law of Rev. Phil Petrasek (ret.). He passed away on January 22. K previously served on the board of Columbia Lutheran Home and was active at Peace, Seattle. He is survived by his wife Betty. Cards may be sent to: Linda and Phil Petrasek, 6252 Lincoln Dr, Ferndale, WA 98248; or Peace Lutheran Church, 8316 -39th Ave SW, Seattle, WA 98136.

Prayers of Celebration:

- ✞ Gabriel Raymond Wagner was born on Christmas Eve to **Anna and Tom Wagner.** Anna is a Diaconal Minister in our synod. Gabriel joins brother Charlie who is 2 1/2 years old. Cards may be sent to: Anna and Tom Wagner, 714 South 206th Street, Des Moines, WA 98198.

Northwest Washington Synod Transitions

	Location/Event	Effective Date
Calls Accepted		
Kevin Bates	Magnolia, Seattle	3/1/2012
Jeff Gaustad	Trinity, Parkland	1/1/2012
Joel Langholz	Our Saviour's, Bellingham	12/7/2011
Death		
Theodore Brueckner	Bothell, Washington	1/1/2012
Installations		
Anne Hall	Lutheran Church in the San Juans	1/28/2011
Joel Langholz	Our Saviour's, Bellingham	12/10/2011
Ordinations		
Emilio Benitez	Burlington, Burlington	2/12/2012
Esau Cuevas	Burlington, Burlington	2/12/2012
Transfers In/Out Of Synod		
Jeff Gaustad	To Southwestern Washington Synod	1/1/2012
Joel Langholz	From Southwestern Minnesota Synod	12/7/2011

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Here 'n There

Because of the cold, the women who use the shelter at University in Seattle (only during the day) were able to stay all day and night on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

- **The Rev. Ronald F. Marshall,** Pastor of First of West Seattle, has published his sermon, "Welcome St. Stephen at Christmas," online at Logia (Blogia), posted December 20, 2011. This is his seventh published sermon.